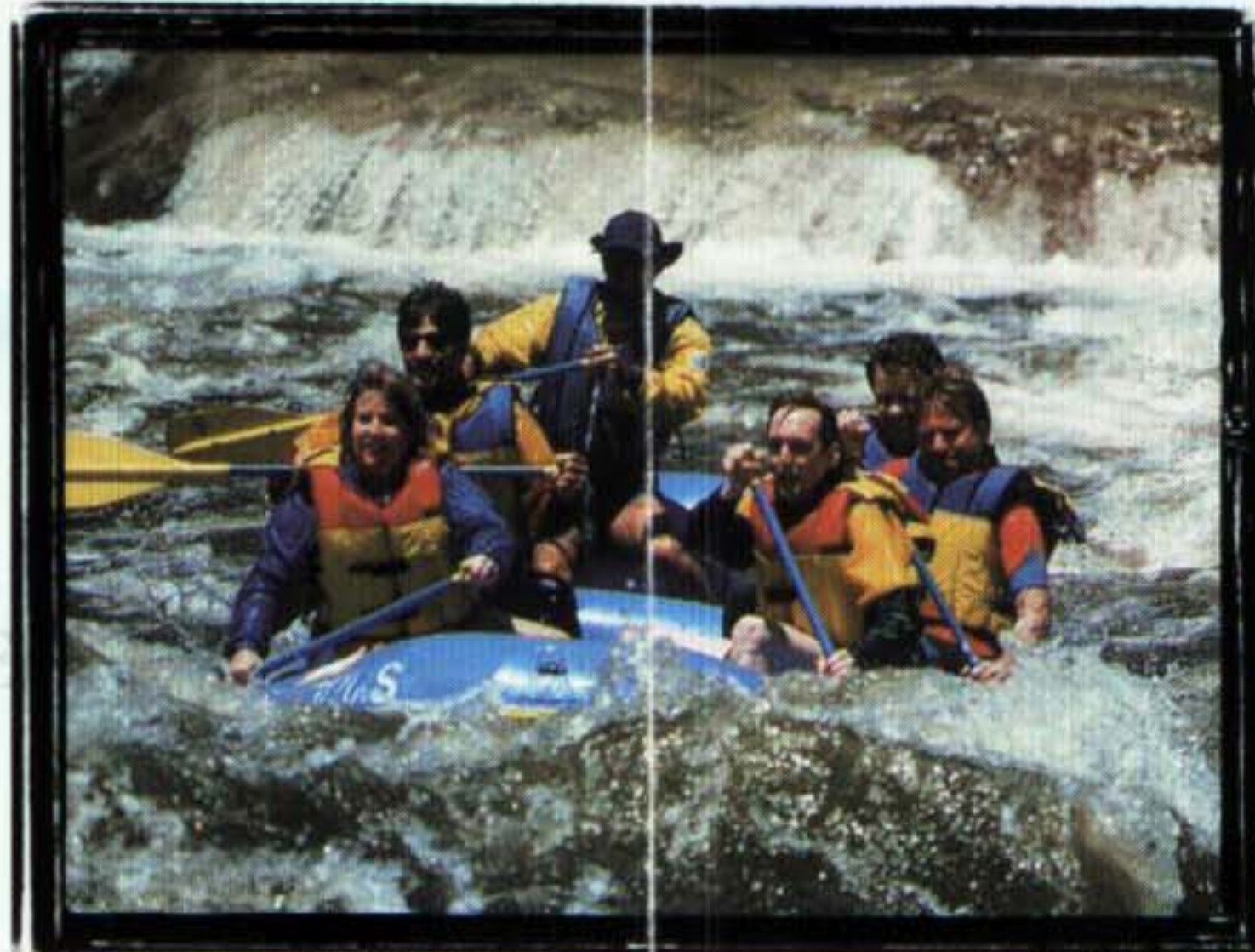


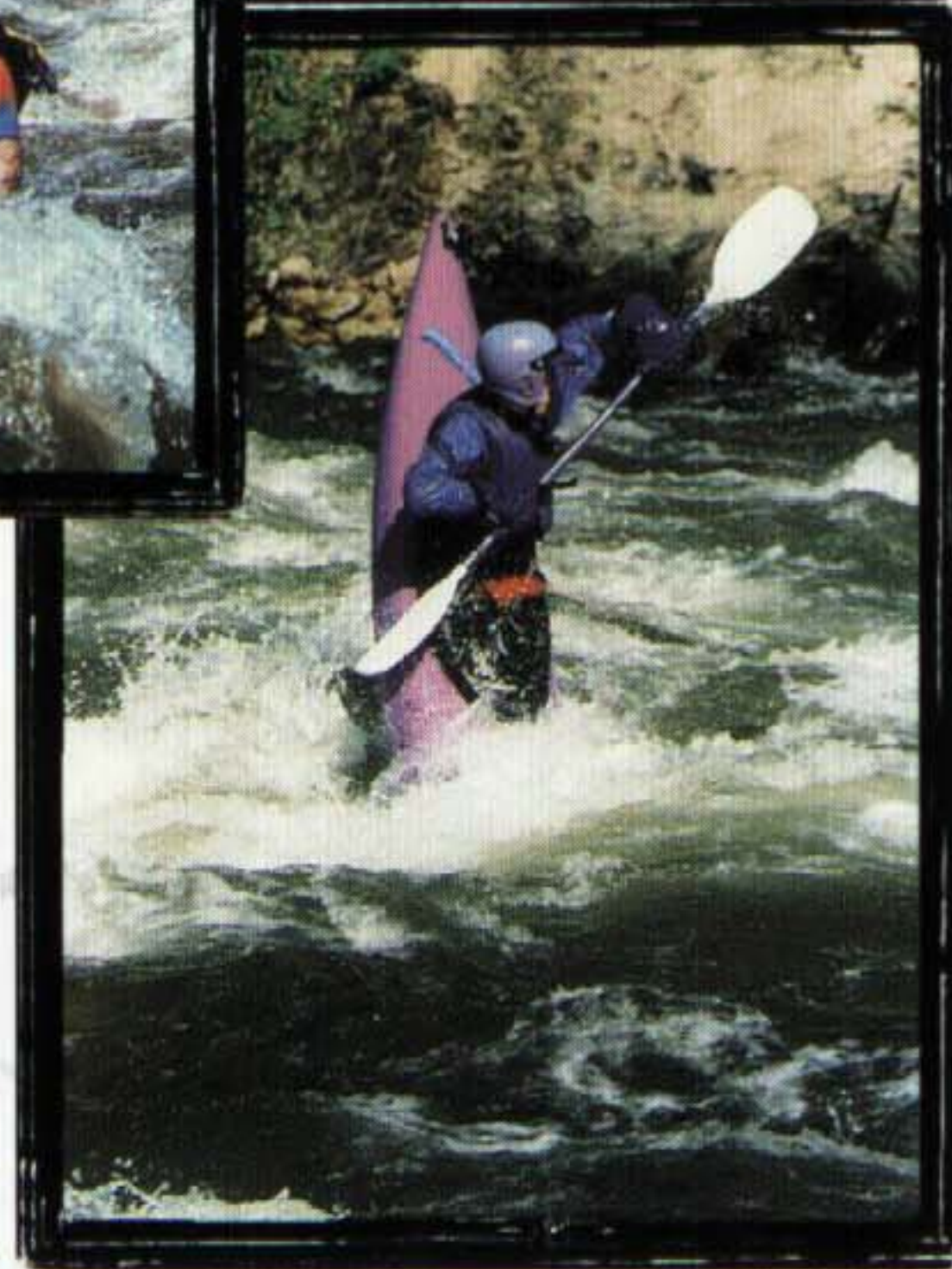
LOWER KERN RIVER

Isabella Lake, created in 1953 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, stores run-off during two-thirds of the year and releases it to Kern County farms in the summer months. The boating season thus coincides with agricultural releases providing the Lower Kern with reliable flows well past the natural season of the Upper Kern — typically from May into September. Summer flows range from 800 to 3000 cfs and are consistent at night and on weekends. About 600 cfs are diverted at Isabella Dam and returned to the river at Borel Powerhouse (Mi. 6) increasing flows downstream of this point.

This pocket of wildland offers challenging whitewater below Miracle Hot Springs (Mi. 7.3), while above it the river is Class II and III at normal flows. Below Miracle Hot Springs, the river is considered Class IV, except Royal Flush (Class VI), which must be portaged. Past the last take-out at Democrat Day-Use Area, the river plunges over an old diversion dam, and then continues through the dangerous Cataracts section where the river quickly falls through the Kern Canyon to the eastern city limit of Bakersfield. While expert kayakers run portions of this segment, the Cataracts are considered extremely dangerous and are not advised for boating.



TOMBSTONE RAPID



EWING'S RAPID

OVERALL LOGISTICS

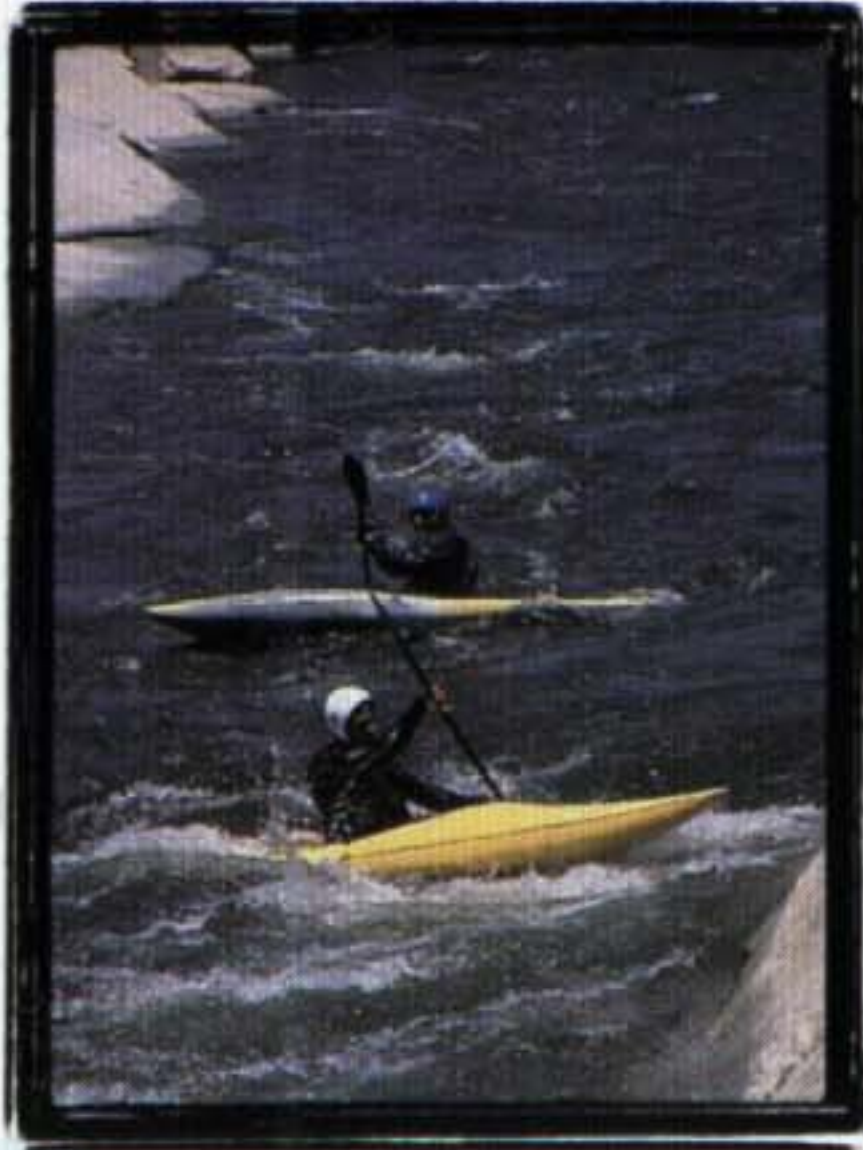
The boatable section of the Lower Kern is 18 miles long. In most places, the river is well below Hwy. 178 and the Old Kern Canyon Road. The Lower Kern can be floated in one- or two-day stretches with developed (fee) Forest Service campgrounds at Mile 6.3 (Sandy Flat) and Mile 7.3 (Hobo Campground). Additionally, undeveloped camping areas are available in the historic mining site of Keyesville. This free area is located just downstream of the Lake Isabella spillway (on the west side of Hwy. 155) along the first 4 miles of the Lower Kern stretch.

CAMPING

For a more primitive camp setting (no fee) there are often riverside spaces available in the old mining area of Keyesville, which is administered by the Bureau of Land Management (no drinking water; limited pit-toilets). Improved amenities are available at the developed (fee) Main Dam, Sandy Flat or Hobo campgrounds along the Lower stretch (see map for locations and amenities). Observe proper rules of fire safety.

LAUNCH AND TAKE-OUT SITES

Designated launch sites are located within the BLM-managed Keyesville Recreation Site, just southwest of the main dam spillway (on the west side of Hwy. 155) and on Forest Service lands farther downstream. On the BLM lands, two main sites are developed for launching at present—Slippery Rock (Mi. 0) and BLM South (Mi. 0.3); another site may be developed at the Bodfish Exit of Hwy. 178 (Mi. 0.6). The undeveloped 178 Bridge area (Mi. 2) may be used, accessed through Keyesville only. Farther downstream are the Forest Service's Sandy Flat (Mi. 6.3) and Miracle (Mi. 7.3) Day-Use area. The Delonegha Bridge Access is under development and is expected to be open as a launch/take-out in the year 2000. The Forest Service's Democrat Day-Use Area (Mi. 18) is the final take-out of the Lower Kern River run. Boaters must remove their craft from the river at this point. Missing this last take-out will put the boater on an extremely dangerous portion of the river!



KEYESVILLE

Of Special Note: The California Department of Boating and Waterways funded several projects on the Kern River as part of the River Trails Program. These projects include improvements at the BLM South Launch, all of Slippery Rock Launch, the bridge at the Royal Flush Portage Trail, and the Delonegha Bridge Access.

RIVER ACCESS

Lower Kern put-ins and take-outs are accessed from the Keyesville roads, Hwy. 178 to Borel Road to Old Kern Canyon Road, and Hwy. 178 to Democrat Day-Use Area (see map).

LOWER KERN RUNS

Flow Information: www.spk-wc.usace.army.mil

Lake Isabella Visitor Center
(760) 379-5646

Kernville Ranger Station
(760) 376-3781

PICTO RUN

Keyesville to Sandy Flat or Miracle Hot Springs

Difficulty: III
Length: 6.3-7.3 miles
Gradient: 28 ft./mi
Season: June-August (normal);
May-September (wet years)
Recommended Levels: 1000-3000 cfs,
Lake Isabella outflow

Put in within Keyesville Recreation Site (BLM) at Slippery Rock, right bank (Mi. 0) or BLM South (Mi. 0.3) on the left bank. Take out at Sandy Flat Day-Use Area, left bank (Mi. 6.3) or Miracle Hot Springs Day-Use Area, left bank (Mi. 7.3).

GUSTO RUN

(SO NAMED FOR THE NUMBER OF
CLASS IV RAPIDS OVER A SHORT DISTANCE.)

Sandy Flat or Miracle Hot Springs to Democrat Day-Use Area

Gradient: 28 ft./mi
Difficulty: IV
Length: 10.7 - 11.7 miles
Season: June-August (normal);
May-September (wet years)
Recommended Levels: 1000-3000 cfs,
Lake Isabella outflow

Note: Mandatory portage on right bank at Mile 11.7, Royal Flush (Class VI).

Put in at Sandy Flat Day-Use Area (Mi. 6.3) or Miracle Hot Springs Day-Use Area (Mi. 7.3). Take out at Democrat Day-Use Area (Mi. 18) on left bank. The river splits around an island upstream of the picnic area. If you take the right channel you may miss the take-out. Downstream of Democrat Day-Use Area, the river plunges over a 30-ft. diversion dam and then into a Class V-VI gorge. Take out at Democrat Hot Springs, Mile 18.3 (private property) only in emergencies.

When the Delonegha Bridge Access is completed, a run will be available to the Democrat Day-Use Area that includes five of the most challenging Class IV rapids on the river, commonly known as "The Big 5".

COLD-WATER DANGERS

The Kern River is a cold water river; take appropriate precautions.

HYPOTHERMIA CHART

IF THE WATER TEMPERATURE IS... DEGREES (F)	EXHAUSTED OR UNCONSCIOUS, YOUR SURVIVAL TIME IS...	OTHERWISE, YOUR EXPECTED SURVIVAL TIME IS...
32.5°	Under 15 min	Under 15 to 45 min
32.5° to 40°	15 to 30 min	30 to 90 min
40° to 50°	30 to 60 min	1 to 3 hrs
50° to 60°	1 to 2 hrs	1 to 6 hrs
60° to 70°	2 to 7 hrs	2 to 40 hrs
70° to 80°	3 to 12 hrs	3 hrs to indefinitely
over 80°	indefinitely	indefinitely

SPECIAL RIVERSIDE HAZARDS

Be aware of and avoid rattlesnakes, stinging nettle, and poison oak. Stay clear of tree and log strainers (sieves), as they are very dangerous!



SANITATION

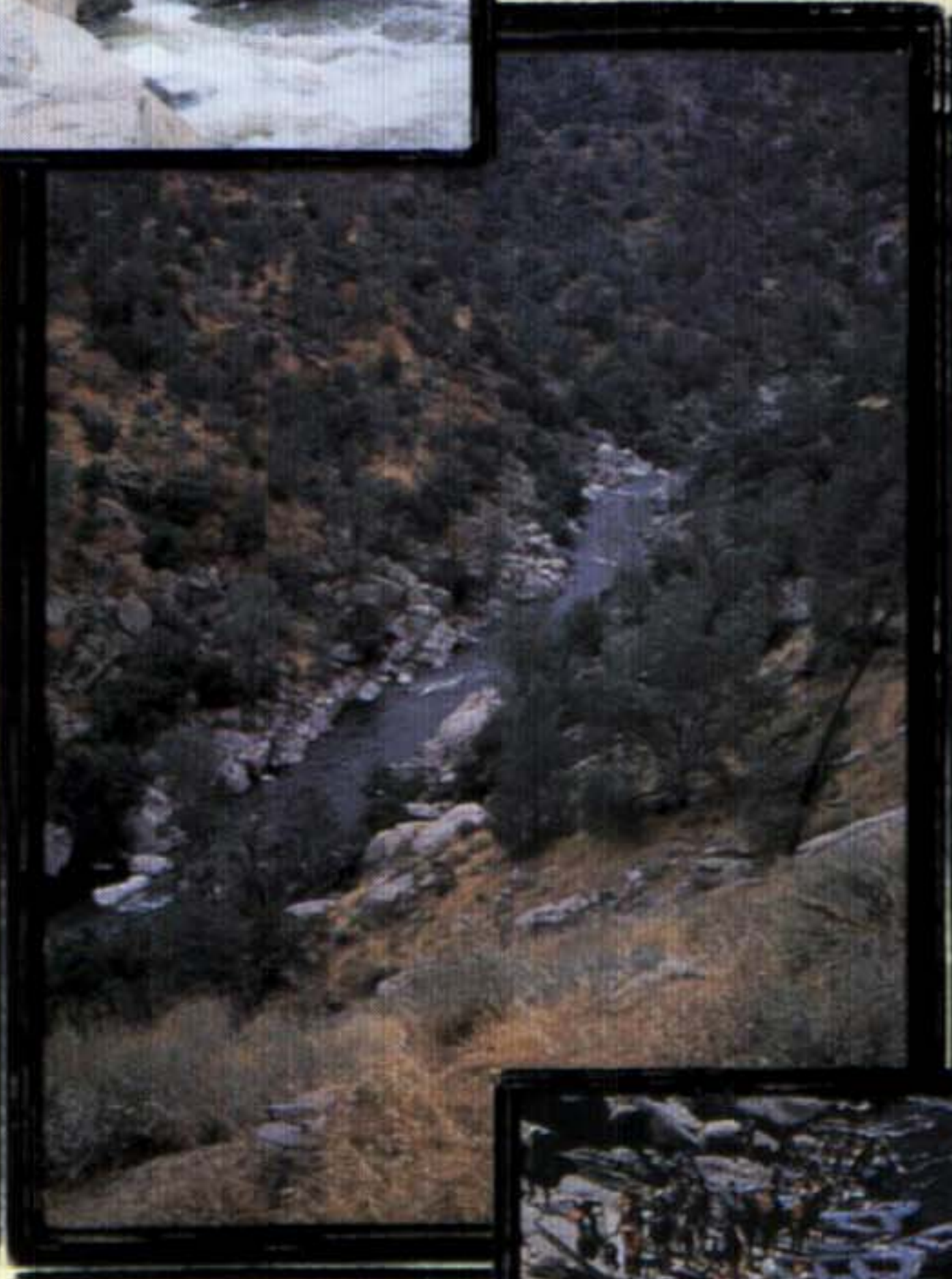
Do not drink water from the river without proper treatment or purification. Dispose of all trash properly (carry it out or dump it in available bins). **Preserve your beautiful public lands.**

PRIVATE PROPERTY

While private lands along the Kern River are scarce, please respect them. In posted areas do not stray above the high-water mark of the riverside, as it marks the boundary of the public domain.

A BOATING TRAIL GUIDE TO THE

UPPER & LOWER KERN RIVER



A WILD AND SCENIC RIVER